آفات اللسان

The Evils of The Tongue

We would like to express our sincere appreciation to those who contributed to the publication of this book. May Allah reward them for their efforts. If you have any corrections, comments, or questions about this publication, please feel free to contact us at:

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> **"...Know if the Nation (all mankind) were to gather together to benefit you with something, it would only benefit you with something that Allah had already prescribed for you..."** [at-Tirmidhi]

Also, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

> **"Whoever does not show gratitude to mankind is not grateful to Allah." [Abu Dawood, Ahmad & others]**

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Introduction

All praises are for Allah, the Most High, and salutations are for His Messenger (peace be upon him) and his household, and all those who follow them with goodness until the Last Day.

Success is the aim of everyone. Invariably, every man and woman in his or her own way hopes to achieve success. For most of mankind however, success is viewed in terms of worldly achievements and thus, from their materialistic pursuits, people essentially aspire to attain peace, contentment, happiness, and ease in this life.

However, in the practical realms, most materialists have their dreams shattered, since the price for material pursuits include fatigue, down-fall, restlessness, heart ache, sorrow, insecurity, and all forms of negative results.

Despite these negative consequences nonetheless, most people continue to remain so caught up in the sway of materialism that they pay little or no importance to the purification of their souls. This is mainly due to the motto of the materialist's world: "The end justifies the means." In fact, when one looks at the religious people (attempting to purify their souls), they seem so confused themselves, that they leave the materialists contented with their material pursuits.

On the contrary, the true believer remains the only one who is certain of what he is about. This is due to the fact that his conviction and certainty spring from the Guidance of Allah, the Glori-

ous. Therefore he starts from the soundest base, one in which he has no doubt. He therefore, turns to the All-Knowing, Allah, to tell him what is success, because he is aware that Allah created him, and He, the Almighty, would best know in what his success lies. Therefore, he listens carefully to what Allah says, believes in it, analyses it, implements it, and is absolutely sure that it would give him success, because Allah is above lying and deception, as He, the All-Knowing, is perfect. Listen to what Allah (ﷻ) tells us is success:

"And by the soul, and Him who perfected (it in proportion). Then He showed it what is wrong for it and what is correct. Indeed he is successful who purifies it (the soul). And indeed he fails who corrupts it." [Ash-Shams 91: 7 - 10]

In the above aayah[1], Allah (ﷻ) is telling us in no uncertain terms, that success lies only in purifying the soul. This is further emphasized in the following aayah, He, the Glorious said:

"We who purifies himself (his soul) will succeed." [Al - A'laa 87:14]

Now since our Lord, Who knows everything, is telling us this is what success is, it becomes incumbent upon us to understand this very clearly, and thereafter, strive our utmost so that we would not misdirect our efforts chasing after failure thinking it is success, as Allah (ﷻ) warns:

[1] **Aayah:** Literally a proof or sign. Used to denote a verse of the Qur`aan. *Pl. aayaat.*

"Say, shall we not tell you (who are) the greatest losers in respect of (their) deeds? Those whose efforts have been wasted in the life of this world while they thought that they were acquiring good by their deeds." [Al-Kahf 18:103- 104]

Thus, in the end, if we do not clearly understand what is success we will be very disappointed, because, in the Hereafter, we would then come to know that our efforts resulted in failure rather than in success. In the following aayah, Allah combines a description of success and the illusory nature of this world. He, the Most High, also informs us that we will be tested in ourselves, our wealth, and our Deen[2], and warns us that the best thing is to be patient and conscious of Himself. He, the Sublime said:

"Every soul shall taste death. And only on the Day of Resurrection shall you be paid your wages in full. And whoever is removed from the Hell fire and is admitted to Paradise. is indeed successful. And what is the life of this world except the enjoyment of deception (i.e. it is only a temporary enjoyment). You shall certainly be tried and tested in your wealth and personal selves, and you shall certainly hear much that will grieve you from those who received the scripture before you (the Jews and Christians) and from those who ascribe partners to Allah (non-believers), but if you patiently persevere and become mutaqeen (people who obey what Allah commands and avoid His prohibitions) these (patience and taqwah) verily will be the determining factor in all af-

[2] Deen: A way of life. Commonly translated as religion.

fairs, and that Is from the greatest of affairs." [Aali 'Imraan 3:185 - 186]

Many salient points can be drawn from these two aayaat but what is most important to us is that, Allah, the Most High, describes success as being able to enter Jannah (Paradise), and to be saved from the Fire of Jahannam (Hell). This can only be achieved if one, while living in this world, possesses the qualities of patience and taqwah (i.e. complete consciousness in all affairs which propels one to obey Allah's commands and avoid His prohibitions). This also implies that to be saved from Jahannam and to enter Jannah, one has to purify his soul.

One of the main factors that negate the success after which believers are seeking, even though they may clearly understand it, and seriously intend to pursue it, is the misuse of their tongue.

The Messenger (ﷺ) asked us:

"Do you know who the bankrupt person is?" We said: "A bankrupt person among us is one without money and provision." He (peace be upon him) said: "The bankrupt in my Ummah (nation of Muslims) is he who comes on the Day of Judgment with Salaah, Fasting and Zakaat, but he also comes having blasphemed this (person), slandered and vilified this (person), ate the wealth of this (one), spilling the blood of this (one), hitting this (one), so (on the Day of Judgment) his good deeds will be given to this one, and this (other one) will be given from his good, and if his good deeds are consumed before everyone have taken their rights from him, their evil deeds would be taken and put upon him (the bankrupt)

and then he will be thrown into the fire (of Hell). [Muslim]

He (ﷺ) also said:

"The servant speaks words, the consequences of which he does not realize, and for which he is sent down into the depths of the Fire further than the distance between the east and the west." [Bukhari and Muslim]

He (ﷺ) also said:

"Whoever can guarantee what is between his jaws (his tongue) and what is between his thighs (his Private part), I will guarantee him Paradise." [Al-Bukhari]

And he (ﷺ) also said:

"Whoever believes in Allah and the last Day, let him speak good or remain silent." [Bukhari and Muslim]

It is narrated on the authority of Mu'aadh Ibn Jabal (May Allah pleased with him), that he asked the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him):

"O messenger of Allah, tell me an act which will take me to Paradise and keep me away from the Hell-Fire." He (peace be upon him) said: "You have asked me about a major matter, yet it is easy for whom Allah makes it easy. You should worship Allah, associating nothing in worship with Him, establish Salaah, pay Zakaat, and fast Ramadaan, and make pilgrimage to the Ka'bah (Hajj)." Then he (peace be upon him) said: "Shall I not show you the gates of goodness? Fasting (which) is a shield; charity extinguishes sin as water extinguishes fire, and

the praying of a man in the depths of the night." Then he (peace be upon him) recited:

"Their sides forsake their beds to invoke their Lord in fear and hope, and they spend (charity in Allah's cause) out of what We have bestowed..." [32:16]

Then he (peace be upon him) said: "Shall I not tell you of the head of the matter (Islam), its backbone and the peak of its hump?"[3] I said: "Yes, O Messenger of Allah." He (peace be upon him) said: "The head of the matter is Islam (the two testimonies of Faith); its backbone is the prayer, and the peak of its hump is Jihaad." Then He (peace be upon him) said: "Shall not tell you of what controls all that?" I said: "Yes. O Messenger of Allah." So he took hold of his tongue and said "Restrain this." I said "O Prophet of Allah. will what we say be held against us?" He (peace be upon him) said "May your mother be bereaved for you. O Mu'aadh! Is there anything that topples people on their faces - or he said on their noses - into the Hell fire, other than the harvests of their tongues." [at-Tirmidhi]

Looking at the ahaadeeth of the Messenger (peace be upon him) we find that one of the main causes to throw people in the Fire of Hell is the evil reaping of the tongue, because with this one part of the body (i.e. the tongue) a person can indulge in more sin than with any other part. With it they can destroy all their other good deeds. So if we can restrain the tongue, we will succeed,

[3] Here the Prophet (ﷺ) is strikes a similtude between Islam and a camel, in order to describe the importance of certain aspects.

(Inshaa Allah). May Allah, the Almighty, help us to understand the importance of restraining our tongue, and thereafter assist us to implement it. Ameen.

It is because of the many dangers of the tongue that we have decided to make a detailed study of the major evils in which it can be involved, so that we can assist ourselves, our brothers and sisters, to earn Allah's Paradise (Al-Jannah) by restraining it.

I have, in this work, tried my best to only use authentic ahaadeeth.

Any mistakes found herein are from me and Shaitaan. May Allah forgive me and may He, the Most High make this effort one that is done sincerely for Him and may He accept it.

Chapter One: Speaking about Allah without Knowledge

Speaking about Allah (ﷻ) without knowledge, is the foremost aspect of shirk which incurs the most severe punishment from Allah. For this reason, this is not allowed under any circumstances. This is clearly communicated by Allah in Surah A'raaf, which highlights the severity of this sin by comparing it with other major sins. He, the Mighty said:

"Say: The things that my Lord has indeed forbidden are, al-Fawaahish (every kind of illegal sexual intercourse) whether committed openly or secretly…"

He, the Most High then moved on to describe a more severe:

"…sin, unjust oppression"

Then to that sin which is even more severe:

"…joining partners (in worship) with Allah (shirk), for which He gave no authority"

And then He, the All-Knowing punctuated it with that sin which most severe:

"…and saying things about Allah of which you have no knowledge. " [Al-A'araaf 7: 331]

In the Tafseer of this aayah, the scholars of Islam have said that:

"If speaking about Islam (Allah, the Most High) is not the greatest crime, then Allah certainly intended to emphasize it that way. Zinaa (fornication and adultery), the first men-

tioned (sin in the Aayah) is an act of one committing a sin on his/her own soul. Secondly: (Allah mentions) oppression, a sin committed against others. This is definitely a greater evil. Then He, the Most High mentions shirk (i.e. joining partners in worship with Allah), obviously a greater evil than the first two, and finally, speaking without knowledge in Islam. Every sin that followed was always greater than the previous one. Thus, if it (speaking about Allah without knowledge) is not the greatest of sins, as it was mentioned last, it was certainly intended (by Allah) to be understood that way."

It should be seriously noted that this very grave sin is only because of Satan's encouragement of the ignorant and sometimes arrogant seekers of name and fame.

Allah, the Most High said:

> **"Verily, it is indeed Satan that makes you do evil and say things about Allah (or His Deen) of which you have no proper knowledge." [Al-Baqarah 2:169]**

Therefore, based upon the above aayah, we find that this is the most serious prohibition with Allah Himself. The following categories of sins are incorporated in **"Speaking of Allah without knowledge"**:

a) Lying upon Allah, the Almighty.

b) Attributing to Allah, the Most High, what is not suitable for Him

c) Bid'ah (innovation) or modifying and altering Allah's Deen

d) Negating what He, the Most High, has affirmed

e) Affirming what He, the Most High, negated

f) Hostility to those who champion His Cause

g) Supporting His enemies

h) Loving those whom He hates and hating those He loves

i) Describing Him with what does not befit Him in His Essence, His Attributes, His Statements or His Actions.

Therefore, because of the amount of sins included in this category, there can be no greater prohibition. It is from this sin that Shirk (associating partners with Allah) and all forms of Kufr (disbelief) originate. All forms of Bid‘ah (innovations) are also founded upon **"speaking about Allah without knowledge"**.

Some aspects of **"speaking about Allah without knowledge"** are explained in details below:

1. Lying upon Allah and/or His Messenger (peace be upon him). Allah informs us that it is not allowed to follow anything without knowledge, He, the Most High, said:

> **"And follow not, (O man i.e. do not say, act or witness) that of which you have no knowledge. Verily! The hearing, and the sight and the heart for each of those will you be questioned " [Al-Israa 17: 36]**

And He, the Mighty also warns us not to speak about Him without knowledge:

> **"Say (O Muhammad (peace be upon him)): indeed the things that my Lord has forbidden are: (and from them is) saying things about Allah of which you have no knowledge". [Al-A' araaf 7:33]**

In the above aayah, Allah (ﷻ) is telling us that He has forbidden Muslims to speak about Him without knowledge, and lying upon Allah (ﷻ) is one way of doing this. The one who lies about Allah (ﷻ) is not only guilty of speaking about Him without knowledge, but also he is amongst the most oppressive of people as Allah Himself describes:

"And who is more oppressive than he who lies against Allah, or who denies His signs..." [Al-A'raaf (7):37]

Besides that, He, the Wise, also describes the punishment on the Day of Judgment for anyone who involves themselves in this dangerous practice, thus:

"And you will see on the day of judgment, those who lie upon Allah, their faces blackened." [Az-Zumr: 60]

Ibn Al-Jawzee, in his Tafseer said:

"Many scholars of Islam are of the opinion, that lying upon Allah and His Messenger (peace be upon him) is disbelief, and that it takes one out of Islam (i.e. it makes him a disbeliever). Lying upon the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) is similarly serious, since indirectly it is lying upon Allah.

The Messenger (peace be upon him), emphasizing the severity of lying upon himself (peace be upon him), said:

"Whoever knowingly upon me, then let him occupy his seat in the Fire". [Bukhari, Muslim & others]

Many Muslims would tell you that stealing, bribery, killing, adultery etc. are all prohibited (Haraam) acts. However, when it comes to lying upon Allah (ﷻ) and/or His Messenger (peace be

upon him), they are not even aware that such a sin exist, and so they would indulge in it freely without worry. This complacency among Muslims regarding this sin comes about because of the great ignorance that prevails concerning **(i)** The rights of Allah and His Messenger and **(ii)** the serious punishment that results from indulging in sin.

This complacent attitude, coupled with ignorance, have been the main factors for the majority of the deviances and differences found in Islam.

Various ways in which lying upon Allah, the Most High and His Messenger (ﷺ) are manifested.

(a) Describing Allah without proof from the Qur'aan or authentic Sunnah.

For example, describing Allah as being everywhere is a serious misconception of which many Muslims are guilty. The Qur'aan and authentic Sunnah are both replete with proofs which show that Allah, the Most High, is above and beyond His creation, and not a part of it, as the statement that 'He, is everywhere' necessitates. The following Hadeeth clearly indicate this. Ma'aaiyah Ibn Al- Hakim said:

> 'I had a servant girl who used to tend to my sheep in the area of Mount Uhud, near a place called Al-Jawwaareeyah. One day I came to see them only to find that a wolf had made off with a sheep from her flock. Since, I, like the rest of Adam's descendants, am prone to do regrettable acts, I gave her a terrible slap in her face. When I came to Allah' Messenger (peace be upon him) with the story, he considered it a grave thing for

> me to have done. I said: 'O Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) couldn't I free her? He (peace be upon him) replied: "Bring her to me." So I brought her. He (peace be upon him) then asked her, **"Where is Allah?"** And she replied: **"Above the sky."** Then He (peace be upon him) asked her: **"Who am I?"** She replied **"You are Allah's Messenger."** So he (peace be upon him) said: **"Free her; for she is a believer."** [Muslim Vol. 1 Pg. 271-2 #1094]

It must be noted that one of the duties of the Messenger (peace be upon him) was to correct any mistakes anyone committed in this religion (Deen). His (peace be upon him) silence after asking her, **"Where is Allah,"** and she replied **"Above the sky,"** is an indication that her answer is correct. His (peace be upon him) affirming that she is a believer, at the end of the Hadeeth, is the direct proof that her answers were correct, otherwise He (peace be upon him) would be lying, and we seek refuge with Allah for even thinking that lying is possible from the Messenger (peace be upon him).

What should be noted, is the fact that the first question he (peace be upon him) asked her was: Where is Allah? and not if she believed in Him, the Most High. Since the question was: 'Where is Allah?' great importance and attention must be given to the fact that, since he (peace be upon him) accepted that Allah is above the skies as the correct answer, that this is direct proof that this is the correct view on the question.

Additionally, it establishes the importance of the issue in Islam, contrary to the belief and attitude of many Muslims, even so-called Sheiks, who claim that the issue is either trivial or too advanced. After all, this was the first question the Prophet (peace be

upon him) asked of a slave girl to determine if she was a Muslim or not!

(b) Explaining the Aayaat of the Quran, or the Hadeeth of die Prophet (peace be upon him) with meanings other than their apparent ones, is also another way of lying upon Allah.

Allah, the Most High said:

> **"O Iblees (Satan)! What prevent you from prostrating yourself to one I have created with My Two Hands..." [Saad 38:75]**

In the above Aayah, Allah, the Most High, is saying that He created Aadam with His Two Hands. Yet some Muslims try to explain "Allah's two Hands" to mean His power Who knows Allah better, Himself or these people? As Muslims, we have to believe in Allah as He describes Himself or as His Messenger (peace be upon him) described Him. Therefore, if He, the Mighty, says he has Two Hands, we must believe that. However, we must also believe, that they are not hands like our: He, the Sublime said:

"There is nothing like Him; and He is the Hearer; the Seer of all." [Shooraa 42:11]

(c) Making Haraam things Halaal

This is another form of lying upon Allah. An example of this is telling Muslims to get out of the Masjid. Since some of our brothers pray according to the way demonstrated by the Prophet (peace be upon him), (i.e. according to the Sunnah), some admin-

istrators order them out of the Masjid just because of that. These arrogant leaders should remember, that amongst the greatest of oppressors, are those who prevent a Muslim from praying in the Masjid of Allah. This is because they are making Haraam the most halaal of deeds, purely out of their unlawful dictatorship. Allah, the Glorious said:

> **"And who is more unjust than those who forbid that Allah's Name should be remembered in His Mosques, and strive after its destruction..." [Al-Baqarah 2: 114]**

(d) Making Halaal things Haraam

This is also another way in which Muslims lie upon Allah, the Glorious. An example of this, is that Allah permits a Muslim man to marry and have up to four wives, at any given time. However, if anyone attaches conditions, and throws doubt on this, he/she is in fact making something which is Halaal, Haraam. This is done by Muslims saying that a man can only marry once, and if the circumstances of necessity presents itself, then the law of polygony (i.e. a man marrying more than one wife) becomes applicable. Allah, the All-Knowing said:

> **"...then many (other) women of your choice, two or three or four, but if you shall not be able to deal justly (with them) then many only one, (or the captives) that your right hands possess..." [An-Nisaa 4:3]**

In the above Aayah, Allah, the Wise has legislated that a man should marry 2, 3 or 4 wives, but if he was afraid of treating them unjustly, that is, he would not be able to upkeep a balanced scale of equal treatment, then the alternative is to marry only one. This,

and only this, is the condition set down by the Shareeah. Anyone trying to say that there are other conditions, is inventing his own law. Those who propagate that the first wife must be barren or sick, or that she has to approve of the second marriage, etc., have no evidence at all to support their false claims.

Even worse are those who have adopted the orientalists' opinion, that polygony is a lustful act. Thus, anyone whose wife is otherwise perfect, but he still takes a second wife, is, in the orientalists' view doing this only out of evil lust and desires. This category is worst, because their statement is blasphemy against the Qur'aan, since Allah, the Wise, promotes and encourages therein, that a man can be married to more than one woman at any given time. It is also blasphemy to the Prophet (peace be upon him), his companions, and the scholars of Islam, as they practiced it during their lifetime.

However, even if it was done purely for lust or desire, it would still be according to the Sunnah, since the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) informs us, that when someone satisfies his sexual cravings or lust in a Halaal way, he will be blessed for it. He (peace be upon him) states:

> **"...and even when one of you cohabits (engage in sexual intercourse), he is rewarded for it." We (the companions) said: "O Messenger of Allah! Would one of us earn blessings and rewards for satisfying his (sexual) lusts and desires? He (peace be upon him) said: "Yes, don't you see that if he was to satisfy it in the Haraam way (by adultery and fornication) that he would be sinned? Similarly, when he satisfies it in the Halaal way, he is rewarded."**

(e) Using fabricated and unauthentic aahadeeth of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) is another way of lying on Allah and His Messenger (peace be upon him).

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

> **"Whoever knowingly lie upon me, then let him occupy his seat in the Fire (of Hell)."Bukhari, Muslim & others]**

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) also said:

> **"Whoever relates a Hadeeth about me, knowingly it to be un-authentic, is himself a liar." [Ibn Majah]**

2. Another Aspect of Speaking about Allah without Knowledge is: Making Legal Decisions (giving fatwas) in Allah's religion without knowledge.

Allah, the Most High said:

> **"Say (O Muhammad (peace be upon him): Indeed the things that my Lord has forbidden are: (and from them is) saying things about Allah of which you have no knowledge." [Al-A'raaf 7:33]**

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

> **"Indeed Allah, the All-Mighty will not take away knowledge by snatching it away from the people but by taking the lives of the knowledgeable people, until when not one scholar remains. The people will then take ignorant people as their leaders, who they will ask to give judgments (in Allah's religion). This they will do without**

knowledge. This will result in their going astray, and leading others astray." [Bukhari and Muslim]

How many Muslims are not in this sad state today? Furthermore, how many rulings and legal decisions are given without knowledge? May Allah save us from this dangerous situation in which we find ourselves.

It is strange that when it comes to secular knowledge, we are so respectful. How many of us would dare speak of medicine in front of a doctor, or dentistry in front of a dentist? Yet we speak about Allah's laws, and make rulings in His religion ignorantly. Are we not aware that He hears us? - What! Have we no sense?

What should scare people who involve in this great sin is the following statement of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him):

"Among the people who will receive the most severe punishment on the Day of judgment is a person who killed a prophet, or who was killed by a prophet, or a person who because of his ignorance, misguides people and lead them astray..." [Ahmad and At-Tabaranee]

What is even more severe and should discourage them even more is the fact that they will carry the burden of everyone who is misguided because of them. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"...whoever introduces a bad way which others follow, he will have its burden and the burden of every one who acts upon it..." [Sahih At-Targheeb wat Tarheeb, Al Mundhiree]

3. Another Aspect of Speaking about Allah without Knowledge is: Ruling by other than what was Revealed by Allah.

Allah said:

> **"And whoever rules by other than by what Allah revealed, those are disbelievers." [Al-Maaida 5:44]**

Allah, the Sublime, further states in the Qur'aan:

> **"…by your Lord (Allah), they can have no faith until they make you (Muhammad (peace be upon him) the judge in all their dispute amongst themselves, and thereafter find no resistance against your decisions, but accept with full submission." [An-Nisaa 4:65]**

Allah, the Most High says:

> **"The only saying of the faithful believers, when they are called to Allah and His Messenger to judge between them, is that they say "We hear and we obey" - and such ate the successful." [An Noor 24:51]**

Ruling by other than what Allah, the Almighty has revealed is indeed one of the most severe types of disbelief to which the tongue can fall prey. So, we should be very careful about this. Be aware that ruling by other than Allah's law is not only for the people who are in governmental positions, although it is easiest for them to fall prey to this, but each person is liable, based upon his responsibility, as is explained in the following hadeeth:

> **"Each one of you is a guardian, and each person is answerable for his flock (those under his charge); so the Imaam is guardian and he is answerable for his flock (his people), the man is guardian of his family and he is**

answerable for his flock (his family), and the woman is guardian in the house of her husband and she is answerable for her flock (in his house)..., and each one of you is a guardian and (responsible for his flock)." [Bukhari and Muslim]

Since most decisions and rulings are generally communicated through speaking, then making Haraam rulings would constitute misuse of the tongue.

So know, that making Halaal what Allah has made Haraam and making Haraam what Allah has made Halaal, or accepting the ruling and following someone who is involved in it, is a type of kufr (disbelief). This is clearly understood from the following Hadeeth:

" 'Adi Ibn Haatim came to the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) and heard him (peace be upon him) recite the following aayah: **'They took their rabbis and monks as Lord besides Allah.'** So he said: **'Messenger of Allah! They never used to worship them.'** He (peace be upon him) said: **'Verily, they have made Haraam (unlawful) what was halaal (lawful), and they made halaal (lawful) what was haraam (prohibited) and (the people) followed them - so that was their (the people) worship of them (the rabbis and monks).'** " [At-Tirmidhee]

This Hadeeth is also applicable to the so-called Islamic countries, as well as every constitution or rules and regulations set up by Organizations and Mastoids, etc., which legislate laws that are not in accordance with those that Allah has revealed.

4. Another Aspect of Speaking about Allah without Knowledge is: Bid'ahs (innovations)

Bid'ah is changing any aspect of worship in Allah's Deen by either adding to it, subtracting from it or altering it in way. It is for this reason that the noble scholars of this Deen expended so much time to warn this Ummah about the great fitnah (trial) of innovation. This is because the dangers of Bid'ah, and its destructive effects upon this Deen, are much greater than that of the other major sins, as is explained from the following Aayaat and ahaadeeth of the Messenger of Allah:

Allah, the Most High said:

> **"Say (O Muhammad (peace be upon him) to the people) if you love Allah then follow me, Allah will love you and He will forgive your sins."[Aali 'Imraan 3: 31]**

The Messenger (peace be upon him) said:

> **"Who ever innovates in this matter of ours (Al-Islam) that which is not from it, will have it rejected". [Bukhari & Muslim]**

And He (peace be upon him) said:

> **"…And hold fast to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the rightly guided caliphs, and beware of newly invented matters (Bid'ah); for every newly invented matter is misguidance which leads to the fire." [Ahmad, Abu Dawood, Tirmidhi & others]**

So, based upon the above ahaadeeth, Muslims must be aware of all matters that are not established from the Sharee'ah.

The following saying of the Messenger (peace be upon him) is even more frightening. He (peace be upon him) said:

> **"Allah does not accept the repentance of anyone involved in Bid'ah, until he leaves it off completely." [Authentic from At-Tabaraanee]**

Brothers and sisters, let us not close off the doors of Repentance with our own hands, by indulging in and/or propagating Bid'ah. However, we must know that even worse for the practitioner of Bid'ah is what the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

> **"Allah refuses to accept the deeds of the practitioner of Bid'ah (innovations in the deen) until he leaves his innovation (Bid'ah)." [Ibn Majah & Ibn Abi 'Aasim]**

Bid'ah is one of the most dangerous sins that sends whoever practices it into the fire (of Hell). Such action from a Muslim is most loved by Shaitaan. This is because the Muslim involved in Bid'ah feels that he is doing something good, but, in effect, it causes Allah's wrath to descend upon him. A few examples of Innovation (Bid'ah) of the tongue are as follows:

a) Bid'ah in Belief

The statement that Allah, the Most High, is everywhere, as was discussed before. (Refer to page 12)

b) Bid'ah in dhikr

Doing dhikr in congregation behind one person, which is a common practice of the Sufis. The following narration beautifully clarifies the evil of such a practice.

Amr Ibn Salmah said: **We used to sit at the door of 'Abdullaah ibn Mas'oud before the morning prayer, so that when he came out, we would walk with him to the mosque. One day Abu Moosaa al-Ash'aree came to us and said: "Has Abu 'Abdur Rahmaan (Ibn Mas`oud) come out yet?" We replied: "No" So he sat down with us until he came out. When he came out we all stood along with him, so Abu Moosaa said to him: "O Aba `Abdir Rahmaan! I have just seen something in the mosque which I deemed to be evil, but all Praise is for Allah, I did not see anything except good." He (Ibn Mas'oud) inquired: "Then what is it?" (Abu Moosaa) replied: "If you live you will see it. I saw in the mosque people sitting in circles awaiting the prayer. In each circle they had pebbles in their hands and a man would say: repeat Allahu Akbar a hundred times. Then they would repeat it a hundred. Then he would say: Say Laa illaha illallaah a hundred times. So they would say it a hundred times. Then he would say: Say Subhaanallaah a hundred times. So they would say it a hundred times. (Ibn Mas'oud) asked: "What did you say to to them?" (Abu Moosaa) said: "I did not say anything to them. Instead I waited to hear your view or what you declared."**

(Ibn Mas'oud) replied: "Would that you had ordered them to count up the evil deeds they acquired and assured them that their good deeds would not be lost!" Then we went along with him (Ibn Mas'oud) until he came to one of these circles and stood and said: "What is this that I see you doing?" They replied: "O Aba 'Abdur Rahmaan! These are pebbles upon which we are counting, takbeer, tahleel and tasbeeh." He (Ibn Mas'oud) said: "Count up your evil

deeds! I assure you that none of your good deeds will be lost. Woe to you, O Ummah of Muhammad (peace be upon him)! How quickly you go to destruction! These are the companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) who are widespread. These are his clothes that have not yet decayed and his bowl which is unbroken. By Him in Whose Hand is my soul! Either you are upon a religion better guided than the religion of Muhammad (peace be upon him) or you are opening **the door of misguidance." They said: "O Aba 'Abdir Rahmman! By Allah, we only intended good." He (Ibn Mas'oud) said: "How many are there who intend good but do not achieve it. Indeed Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) said to us: "A people will recite the Quran but it will not pass beyond their throats."**

"Then he left them. 'Umar ibn Salamah (the sub-narrator) said: 'We saw most of these people fighting against us on the day of Nahrawaan, along with the Khawaarij.' " [Ad-Darimee Vol. 1#79]

It should be observed from the above incident involving Ibn Mas'oud and the people who were making their congregational (Soofie like) Dhikr, that they were:

(i) In the right place (i.e. the Masjid),

(ii) Saying the right and prescribed dhikr -Tasbeeh, Takbeer, etc

(iii) Doing it at the right time, that is before, or according to some narrations, after the Salaah.

However, it was only one difference that caused Ibn Mas'oud to reject and rebuke what they were doing -HOW they did it, that is,

in congregation. This emphasizes the importance of following the Sunnah with precision in every possible way.

The following example further highlight the importance of doing any act of worship, especially dhikr or du'aa exactly and precisely as was demonstrated by the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him).

Both Al-Bukhari and Muslim narrated the Hadeeth that the Prophet (peace be upon him) taught Al-Baraa ibn 'Aazib a du'aa to use before sleeping, part of which was: "...Aaman-tu bi kitaabi-kal lathee an-zalt, **wa bi nabiyyikal** la-thee ar-salt…" However, when Al-Baraa repeated it to the Prophet (peace be upon him) he said: "..wa **bi rasoolikal** la-zhee arsalt..." The Prophet (peace be upon him) immediately corrected him saying: "No! **bi nabiyyikal** la-zhee ar-salt."[4]

This shows the importance of adhering to the Sunnah, and not even changing a single word, which in essence has the same meaning as the substituted word (i.e. Nabee means prophet and Rasool means Messenger and both are titles given to the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) by Allah, the Most High).

c) Bid'ah of Du'aa in congregation.

A widespread practice amongst Muslims is making Du`aa in congregation after the Fard (compulsory) Salaah. This practice, in fact, does not have any proof from the Sunnah of the Prophet

[4] He replaced the word "Prophet" with "Messenger", but the Prophet (ﷺ) corrected him, even though a messenger is of a higher status than a Prophet. (e)

(peace be upon him) or the companions who led Salaah all their lives but never once made a congregational du‘aa after the Salaah.

Of the many innovations of the tongue, these few examples will suffice.

The majority of Muslims are deeply involved in many innovations. However, we must realize that Allah can only be worshipped with what He, the Most High, legislated, and that it must be performed as precisely as possible as was explained or shown to us by the Prophet (peace be upon him) and as it was understood by the pious predecessors (the companions). Therefore, before doing anything in this Deen, a Muslim must esquire about the proof for that action from Quraan and authentic Sunnah, or whether it was something practiced by our pious predecessors from among the companions, the Taabi‘een[5] and the Tabi Tabi‘een[6] If there is no precedent from them, then It is compulsory for us to leave it. May Allah guide us an to practice Islam in its pristine purity. Ameen.

[5] The students of the companions. (e)
[6] The students of the Taai‘een. (e)

Chapter Two: Committing Shirk Through the Tongue

Shirk refers to assigning a partner or partners with Allah in whatever form it may take, and it is the opposite of worshipping Allah alone. This act of associating partners with Allah is (one of) the most dangerous sins in which a Muslin can be involved. In fact, if someone dies in such a state, then he/she will not be forgive Allah protect us from all types of shirk. Ameen.

About shirk Allah, the Most High said:

> **"Indeed Allah does not forgive shirk (that you associate any partners with Him), but He forgives other than that to whom He pleases." [An Nisaa 4:48]**

He, the Sublime said:

> **"Indeed shirk is the greatest oppression." [Luqman: 13]**

Allah, the Most High also said:

> **"...Indeed he who associates partners in worship with Allah, then Allah has forbidden Jannah (Paradise) for him, and the Fire (of Hell) will be his abode." [Al-Maaida 5:72]**

In addition to that, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

> **"Shall I not inform you about the greatest of sins?" We said: "Surely, O Messenger of Allah." He (peace be upon**

him) said: "Associating partners (shirk) with Allah..." [Bukhari and Muslim]

Proofs indicating the dangers of shirk (associating partners with Allah) from the Qur'aan and authentic Sunnah are numerous, but the above reference would suffice. Shirk is a very extensive subject about which most Muslims are ignorant. However, a sin that Allah does not forgive definitely needs serious attention, because Satan would work assiduously to get us to concern ourselves with smaller issues, thinking that we are saved, but causes us to practice Shirk. Listen to what Allah, Most High, said:

"Say, Shall we not tell you (who are) the greatest losers in respect of (their) deeds. Those whose efforts have been wasted in this life while they thought that they were acquiring good by their deeds. [Al-Kahf 18: 103-104]

Allah, the Sublime said:

"And if you commit shirk (associating partners with Allah) all of your works would be in vain (destroyed) and you wilt definitely be among those who are the losers." [Al-Zumar 39:65]

It is reasonable to conclude that unless we, as Muslims, know clearly what is Shirk, then we are likely to become ready victims of it. And if we are in shirk (may Allah save us from this plight), then, based upon the above statements of Allah, about which there is no doubt, all of our works would be destroyed and we would be from among the losers, although we may think we are not doing anything wrong. Brother and sisters, let us make more sincere effort to know our Deen, and not just assume that, because Allah is All-forgiving, that we would get His forgiveness.

We must remember also, that He is swift in punishment. Forgiveness has to be earned, and it is not given to someone just because he carries a Muslim name, or says he is Muslim. It is earned by striving.

Allah, the Almighty, said:

> **"...and strive all-together for the forgiveness from your Lord..." [Aali 'Imraan 3:133]**

The grave sin, Shirk, like acts of worship, can be done with either the heart, the tongue, or the limbs. However, we will only deal with those aspects of shirk which are committed by the tongue herein.

Shirk Commfited by The Tongue

Supplicating to Other Than Allah.

He, the Glorious said:

> **"Supplicate to Me and I will answer you" [Ghaafir: 60]**

The Messenger (peace be upon him) said:

> **"Du'aa (supplication) is worship itself." [Abu Dawood]**

Since Du'aa is the essence and main element of worship, as it is the seeking of help from a supernatural source, it must be directed to the Creator and Sustainer, Allah Himself. It is precisely for this reason that, Allah, the Sublime, warns:

> **"And supplicate not to any other than Allah, that which can neither profit nor harm you, but if you do so, then**

certainly you will be from among the transgressors." [Yunus 10:106]

Yet, we would find Muslims going to graves of seemingly pious people, supplicating to them to fulfill their needs. It is also commonplace for some Muslims to make Du'aa through the name of the Prophet (peace be upon him), as well as other righteous people. However, all supplications must be directed towards Allah, Alone. To do otherwise constitutes shirk, -pure and simple.

Kufr Ni'mah: Disbelief Manifesting Itself in Ungratefulness for Allah's Blessings or Favors.

Allah, the Sublime said:

"They recognize the bounty (blessings) of Allah, yet they deny it and most of them are disbelievers". [An-Nahl 16:83]

Instead of praising Allah for the bounties He, the Sublime bestows upon us, we deny them and sometimes feel it is by our own hands that we have achieved whatever Allah has blessed us with. The correct attitude would be to acknowledge, that all that we have is only from Allah, the Almighty. This should help us to feel less independent, and make us more grateful to Allah, the Sublime. This, in turn, will cause us to receive more of Allah's blessing (Inshaa Allah), He, the Glorious said:

"And if you are thankful, I will increase (My blessings) to you." [Ibraheem 14:7]

Visiting Fortunetellers, Obeah Men or Psychics; etc.

The Messenger (peace be upon him) said:

> **"Whoever goes to a fortuneteller and asks him anything, Allah will not accept his Prayers for forty days." [Muslim]**

This is the punishment for going to him and seeking his help. However, if a Muslim believes in what the fortuneteller says, the harm is even greater. The Messenger (peace be upon him) said:

> **"Whoever goes to a fortuneteller and believes in what he says, has disbelieved in what was brought by Muhammad (i.e. Islam)." [Ahmad]**

This Hadeeth clearly declares, that to believe anything from the fortuneteller/obeah man, is disbelief.

These experts at deception have deceived many people, and extracted from them much wealth. Yet, many Muslims frequent them. May Allah assist and guide us from such practitioners of evil.

Swearing By Other Than Allah

Ibn 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with them both, said that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

> **"Allah prohibits you from swearing by your fathers, so whoever swears, let him swear by Allah or keep quiet." [Bukhari & Muslim]**

It is stated in another Hadeeth of the Prophet (peace be upon him) that:

"Whoever swears by other than Allah has committed shirk." [Ahmad, Tirmidhee & Al-Haakim]

Swearing is allowed in Islam, but a person can only swear by Allah. If he swears by anything else, then this is an aspect of Shirk. To swear by the moon or the star or any of Allah's creation, is Haraam. Allah can swear by whatever He wants, but we can only swear by Him. The common practice among many Muslims to swear by the Qur'aan is a Bid'ah (innovation), and should be discouraged. What is even more heinous, is to swear by Allah while knowing full well that one is lying.

Denying a Name or Description of Allah or Changing its Apparent Meaning

This occurs when someone denies any Name or Attribute of Allah that He affirmed for Himself, or that His Messenger (peace be upon him) affirmed for Him, the Most High. For example, to deny or cast doubt on the fact that Allah has Two Hands, or that He hears, or that He is above the heavens are aspects of Shirk which fall within this category. To seek to explain the Hands of Allah as His Mercy, Strength, Power, etc., falls into the above category also. This type of explaining of Allah's Attributes is also prohibited in Islam.

It must be noted that the belief of *Ahlus-Sunnah wal Jamaa'ah* regarding Allah's Names and Attributes is:

"That Muslims must believe in all of Allah's Names and all of His Attributes that are found in the Qur'aan and the authentic Sunnah. They must accept them exactly and literally as they are."

The above demands the following:

(a) Not seeking to explain any of them by similitude (i.e. by saying for example that Allah's Hands are like the hands of mankind).

(b) Not seeking to explain "How it is" (i.e. by seeking to explain, for example, how Allah is established above His Throne).

(c) Not declaring it to be figurative language and not literal (i.e. by saying, for example, that the meaning of 'the Hand of Allah is with the Jamaa'ah' means 'His Mercy or Blessings' and not literally 'Hand'. Or to say that Allah does not have Hands or a Face because these are human or animalistic characteristics, and thus the "Hands" and "Face" is figurative and not literal.[7]

To Blaspheme Allah, His Quraan or His Messenger (peace be upon him)

Another aspect of disbelief is to blaspheme Allah, His Messenger (peace be upon him), the Qur'aan, the Sunnah of the Messenger, the Deen of Islam, Muslims, the angels, etc.

Ibn Taimiyah said: **"If the one who blasphemes is a Muslim, he has disbelieved, and therefore, should be killed (by the Khaleefah). This is a consensus among the four Imaams."**

Allah, the Almighty said:

> **"Verily, those who harm Allah and his messenger (by, abusing or telling lie against Allah and his messenger),**

[7] At the same time, we must affirm that Allah and His Names and Attributes are **nothing** like His creation.

Allah has cursed them in this world, and in the hereafter, and has prepared for them a humiliating torment " [Al-Ahzaab 33:57]

Deniers of Qadr

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"Every Ummah has its Majoos (Magians) and the Majoos of my ummah are those who say: "There is no Qadr (Predestination)' if they become sick do not visit them and if they die do not witness them (i.e. to attend their funerals)". [Ahmad]

It Is Prohibited To Sit in the Company of Those Who Give Deviant or Wrong Interpretations About the Qur'aan or Islam.

This evil is so great that Allah, the Wise, even prohibits Muslims to allow themselves to overhear the conversations of those who involve in the wrong interpretations about the Qur'aan or Islam. Allah, the Great, said:

"And when you see those who engage in false conversation about Our Verses by mocking at them, stay away from them till they turn to another topic. And if Satan causes you to forget, then after you have remembered, sit not in the company of the evil-doers." [Al-A'raaf 7:68]

And He, the Most High said:

"And stay away from those who take their religion as play or amusement and are deceived by the Life of this world..." [Al-A'raaf 7:70]

Allah, the Glorious said:

"And We have already revealed in this Qur`aan, that whenever you hear the verses of Allah denied and mocked at, then sit not in such a company until they change the subject of discussion. (If you sit in such company), then, verily you are just like them. Surely Allah will gather all the disbelievers and hypocrites in Hell." [An-Nisaa 4: 140]

In his Tafseer, Imaam Al-Qurtubi has noted that the scholars of Islam have declared it totally forbidden for anyone to remain in any such company (i.e. the company of sinners), whilst they are committing these sins, or the people of Bid'ah, or of anyone who distorts the teachings of Islam. [Al-Qurtubi Vol. 5 Pg. 268]

Chapter Three:
Afflicting a Muslim with the Tongue

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

> **"The whole of the Muslim is sacred, his blood, his property and his honor." [Muslim]**

And in his farewell Khutbah, he (peace be upon him) said:

> **"...Indeed your blood, your wealth and your honor are all Haraam (sacred) to each other, just as this day is sacred (the Day of 'Arafah), in this sacred month (Dhul Hijjaa) in this sacred place (the sacred precinct of Makkah)." [Al-Baihaqee]**

Backbiting

Allah, the Most High said:

> **"Do not backbite one another, would any one of you love to eat the flesh of his dead brother, verily you detest this...." [Al-Hujuraat 43:12]**

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

> **"Backbiting is mentioning something about your brother that he dislikes." [Maalik & Ibn Mubaraak]**

And in another narration, he (peace be upon him) said:

"Backbiting is to mention about a person something about him in his absence". [Abu Dawood]

The Messenger (peace be upon him) said:

"Do you know what is *gheebah* (Backbiting)? They said "Allah and His Messenger (peace be upon him) know best." He (peace be upon him) said: "Mentioning about your brother what he would hate (in his absence)'. It was said: 'What about if what I say about my brother is true?' He (peace be upon him) said: "If what you said about him is true then you would have backbited him, and if it is not true, then he is slandered (*buhtaan*)." [Muslim]

Based on the above ahaadeeth backbiting can be defined as: "Mentioning about a person in his absence something he would hate even if it is a characteristic he possesses." Backbiting is haraam and the person who involves in it must repent.

When is talking about your brother not considered to be backbiting? Hind, the wife of Abu Sufyaan, came to the Messenger (peace be upon him) and said:

"Abu Sufyaan is a miserly man and he does not give me enough for me and my child except that I take from him and he does not know. " The Messenger (peace be upon him) said: **"Take what is commonly known as enough for you and your child."** [Bukhari & Muslim]

It is clear from the above Hadeeth, that in certain specific cases, a Muslim is permitted to talk about someone behind his or her back. For example:

a) If a man is oppressed, he can go to the ruler or judge or someone who has the ability to stop the oppression, and make a petition, as Hind did.

b) Also, when seeking an Islamic ruling, it is allowed to mention a person's bad quality, as is established in the hadeeth of Hind above, as when Hind asked: "Abu Sufyaan is a miserly man and he does not give me enough for me and my child except if I take from him and he does not know".

c) Seeking help to change a wrong by taking one's right. If someone cannot change it himself, then he can go to someone who is in a position to change it. Thus, he will have to backbite his oppressor to inform the person who can give him authority. The hadeeth of Hind above exemplifies this.

In the case of "commanding good and forbidding evil", a person is allowed to mention the known innovation or sin of another person, in order to warn others about it. However, if one declares the actions of people that are done in secret, this is considered to be backbiting.

One is also permitted to inquire about a person who has a specific nickname, like the deaf man, or blind man. However, if his correct name is known, then it would not be allowed to use other false names.

In the same vein, one is allowed to forewarn and caution his brother or sister, about someone who is a sinner or innovator, in order for them to be free from their influence. Allah, the Most High said:

"Help one another in righteousness and piety; but do not assist one another in sin or transgression" [Al-Maaidah 5:2]

Some factors that cause backbiting and their cures:

1. Subsiding anger. This is done by backbiting the person who kindles his anger - so every time this person makes him angry, he subsides it by backbiting the person. Through this (the backbiting), he feels he is getting even with the other person. The cure for this is the advice of the Messenger (peace be upon him):

"Whoever suppresses his anger while in a position to enforce it, Allah will call him at the head of the creation until he chooses for him from the hoor 'een (special women of Jannah that are promised to the believer), for him to marry from them as he pleases." [Ahmad and At-Tabaraanee]

2. Wanting to keep Mends. In order to maintain friends with others, a person indulges in backbiting because he is afraid of losing their friendship. Thus he does not reprimand them when they backbite, but indulge in it with them. To cure this he must remember the saying of the Messenger (peace be upon him):

"Whoever solicits the pleasure of men by displeasing Allah, Allah will consign him to mankind." [At-Tirmidhi]

3. Wanting to raise one's status with other people. This is done by debasing others, by saying things like such and such a person, is ignorant or his understanding is weak, thus indirectly implying that he is more knowledgeable than the one he debases. In order to cure this sickness, the perpetrator must be reminded that Allah is the final judge and this person that he is claiming is

ignorant, might be better than him with Allah. Furthermore, that person may be excused because of his lack of understanding.

4. Playing around and making fun of others. This could involve mockery and sarcasm. It is enough to remind those indulging in this practice of what Allah, the Most High said:

> **"O you who believe! Let not a group scoff at another group, it may be that the latter is better than the former..." [Al-Hujuraat 49:11]**

At other times, it could involve lies, as mention is made of some people in a way to make others laugh. It is enough to answer with the statement of the Messenger (peace be upon him):

> **"Woe to the one who speaks and lies to make people laugh, woe to him, woe to him." [Ahmad, Abu Dawood & others]**

5. Envy. Through envy, a person is backbitten because of his noble position and high standing, in order to debase and reduce his worth in people's eyes. The envier should reflect upon the statement of the Messenger (peace be upon him):

> **"Faith and envy cannot exist together in the heart of the slave". [Ahmad 8: 436]**

6. Fear of Blame. Something is attributed to a person who wants to free himself from it, by blaming another person totally, although they both had shared in the act. He does this so that he can free himself from being blamed. The correct thing to do is to acquit himself honestly, and not try to throw the blame upon anyone else.

7. Having too much spare time. This can cause a person to fall into backbiting, because it is easy for such an idle mind to become busy with men, their honor and their faults. To correct this a person must spend his time in acts of obedience to Allah, worship, seeking knowledge, and teaching others. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

> **"Two blessings are misused by people, good health and spare time to do good." [Bukhari]**

8. Trying to get close to a person in authority to acquire material gains. In order to get close to those in authority and to gain their favors, someone may backbite his workmates with his boss. To cure this, he must realize the true value of this world with Allah, the Glorious, and that He is the Provider, and that He would allow him to get only what he deserves. And no boss can give him anything if Allah, the Sublime does not will such for him. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

> **"...know that if the nation (all mankind) were to gather together to benefit you with something, it would only benefit you with something that Allah had already prescribed for you..." [At-Tirmidhi]**

Aspects of backbiting that people might not feel is backbiting:

1. If someone is involved in backbiting, and when he is reprimanded he responds: "I am prepared to say it in front of him."

He can be replied to with the following: You mentioned about him something he would not like in his absence. This is backbiting, and being prepared to mention it in front of him, is a different issue altogether. There is no proof from the Shar'eeah to show that being prepared to mention it to him allows backbiting.

2. If a specific person is mentioned, and someone says something loudly that implies something negative, like: "We seek refuge with Allah from being misguided" then this is also backbiting, because it is mentioning something bad about a person in his absence in an indirect way.

3. A statement about a person like: "Such and such a person is being tested with such and such" or "we used to do the same thing," implies it is something bad, and mentioned in his absence. Is that not what we have defined as backbiting?

4. Thinking it is allowed to backbite someone because he is a younger person. There is no proof for this.

5. Finding it easy to talk about someone because he is poor, or because he is weak, or a sinner, or the like.

How should the Backbiter be treated? The backbiter should be corrected by stopping him from backbiting and he should be warned that he is involved in a great sin.

The one to whom the backbiter comes should defend the brother who is being backbitten.

Also, the person who listens to the backbiter should be aware that he is encouraging an evil, and if the person does not stop, then he should walk away from him.

Slander & False Accusations

Slander and the making of false accusations, are considered to be major sins in Islam. This involves fabricating or spreading a lie about your brother (Muslim) in his absence.

The Messenger (peace be upon him) said:

> **"Do you know what is *gheebah* (Backbiting)? They said: "Allah and His Messenger (peace be upon him) know best. He (peace be upon him) said, "Mentioning about your brother what he would hate (in his absence)'. It was said: 'What about if what I say about my brother is true?' He (peace be upon him) said: "If in him is what you say you would have backbited him, and if it is not in him. then he is slandered (*Buhtaan*)." [Muslim]**

Of course, slander is a more heinous sin than backbiting, since it involves not only backbiting but also lying with intent to maliciously dishonor a Muslim.

The Messenger (peace be upon him) also said:

> **"...And whoever knowingly argues uselessly, Allah will continue to be angry with Him until he refrains from it, and whoever says about a believer, that which is not in him Allah will house him in a mill of the people of the fire of Jahannam until he leaves off what he said..." [Abu Dawood, Al-Haakim & others]**

Some of the punishment for backbiting and slandering are:

1. They are both major sins in Islam, and the one who does not cease from it and repent, would be punished severely in the grave. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

> **"...On the night that I was taken (to Jerusalem and up to the heavens), I saw a set of people who were (being punished by) taking their own finger-nails (which were long and metallic) and scraping the flesh of their own faces**

(and eating it). When I asked Jibreel about them, he said: 'these are people who used to be engaged in back-biting'." [Ibn Abi Duniya - Kitaab Al-Ghiba wan Nameemah]

Ibn 'Abbaas, may Allah be pleased with him, said; the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) passed by two graves and said:

"The inhabitants of (these graves) are being punished for major sins; one of them used to engage in slandering others..." [Al-Bukhari Vol. 2 Pg. 259]

2. Whoever backbites or slanders, Allah, the Most High vows to expose their faults. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

"O you who believe with your tongue and not your hearts, do not seek after the faults of Muslims, nor pry into their mistakes or downfalls. For whoever amongst you will investigate the mistakes of Muslims, then Allah will go after his mistakes and expose him, even if that mistake was committed (secretly) in the privacy of his house." [Ibn Abi Duniya- Kitaab Al-Ghiba wan Nameemah]

Giving False Testimonies or Bearing False Witness

Among the other blatant misuse of the tongue is witnessing to falsehood or bearing false witness. Allah, the Glorious said:

"...And shun lying speech (false statement)" [Hajj:30]

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"Shall I not inform you about the greatest of sins." We said: "Most assuredly" He (peace be upon him) said:

"Shirk! (associating partners) with Allah, ungratefulness to parents', he was reclining but now sat up and said: 'and bearing false witness', he continued to repeat it so much that we said: We wish that he would stop speaking." [Bukhari & Muslim]

Imaam Adh-Dhahabee in his work Al-Kabaair (The Major Sins) said:

"The bearer of false witness commits several major sins. These are as follow:

(a) He is spreading lies and falsehood. And Allah, the Most High said:

"... Truly, Allah does not guide anyone who is a Musrif (one who commit great sins, oppressor, transgressor), a liar..." [Ghaafir 40: 28]

(b) He was unjust to the person against whom he testified, because it is from his witness, that the person was either deprived of his property, or his honor, or his life.

(c) He was unjust to the person in whose favor he testified, because he made it possible for him to acquire property that does not belong to him, thereby rendering him a sinner.

(d) He is unjust to himself, by being the one who bore false witness."

Accusing/Slandering Pious Women (of adultery)

Allah, the Sublime said:

"Verily, those who accuse chaste women who never ever think of anything touching their chastity, and (who) are good believers, (their accusers) are cursed in this Life and in the Hereafter, and for them will be a great torment " [An-Noor 24:23]

Allah, the Most High, is making it clear in this aayah that anyone who slanders pious women are cursed in this world, and in the Hereafter, they will have a severe torment.

The Messenger (peace be upon him) said:

"Keep away from seven dangerous and destructive sins (and from them is) ... slandering pious women (by accusing them of adultery)..." [Bukhari & Muslim]

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"Whoever accuses what his right hand possesses of adultery will have the judgment established (against him for it) on the Day of Judgment, unless it is as he claimed." [Bukhari & Muslim]

Note: The Sharee'ah stipulates that, for the accusation of Zinaa (adultery or fornication), that four mature, male witnesses must testify that they all (together) saw the accused in the actual act itself (i.e. "as a bucket enters into a well" according to the Prophet (peace be upon him). If the testimony is not as stipulated above (i.e. they have not seen the actual act in itself), but have only seen convincing evidences, or there is three or less witnesses, then their testimonies are rejected. And Allah, the Most High stipulates:

"And those who accuse chaste women, and produce not four witnesses, hog them with eighty stripes, and reject their testimony forever..." [An-Noor 24: 4]

Lying is Another Evil of the Tongue

Allah, the Sublime, said:

"Indeed those who fabricate Lies upon Allah, are only those who disbelieve in His signs, and it is they who are truly liars." [An-Nahl : 105]

Allah, the Almighty said:

"A painful torment is theirs because they used to be liars" [Al-Baqarah 2:10]

Ibn Mas'oud, may Allah be pleased with him, said that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"Truth guides to righteousness, and righteousness leads to Janaah and indeed a person would involve in truth until he is written with Allah as truthful. And lying guides to immorality which guide to Jahannam, and a person would lie until he is written with Allah as a liar." [Bukhari & Muslim]

From among the characteristic of a hypocrite, described to us by the Prophet (peace be upon him), is that:

" when he speaks he lies': [Bukhari & Muslim]

Hypocrites are the worst of people, because of their evil deeds which involve deception. Consequently, their punishment would be the most severe on the Day of Judgment. So, brothers and

sisters, avoid lying at all cost, so as to save yourself from being even considered to be associated with the worst of mankind.

'Aaishah, informing us about the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

> **"If he (peace be upon him) finds anyone from his family lying, he would turn away from that person until he/she repents." [Ahmad and Al-Haakim]**

Situations in which lying is allowed:

A person is only allowed to lie if it involves the following:

- Making peace between two Muslims.

- Lying to the enemy in battle to protect other Muslims.

- The lying of a man to his wife and she to her husband (to keep their relationship harmonious). However, this should not be understood to mean cases of clear lies. Rather, it is the extolling of the virtues of each other, by using pleasant words, although it contains exaggeration. And Allah knows best.

All of the above are established in the following Hadeeth of the Prophet of Allah (peace be upon him):

> **"I do no consider it lying: A man who makes peace between other men, a man who speaks in battle, a man speaking to his wife, or a wife speaking to her husband." [Abu Dawood]**

Incidents of lying that are not considered by people as lies:

There are many blatant cases of lying, although people do not consider them to be such:

1. Calling a child for something and there is nothing to give him. 'Abdullah ibn 'Aamir said:

> **"The Messenger of Allah came to our house while I was a boy, so he 'Abdullaah said: 'I left to go and play. My mother said 'Come 'Abdullaah for me to give you (something).' The Messenger (peace be upon him) said: 'What will you give to him?' She said 'I will give him a date.' He (Abdullaah) said, that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: 'If you did not have anything to give to him, a lie would have been written against you.'" [Abu Dawood & Ahmad]**

Parents, take heed! Since we want to raise our children upon Islam, and to train them to be truthful, we must beware of lying to them, because that will teach them to lie.

It should be noted that this incident was related by someone who was young when it happened to him. So, children take note of incidents much more than we realize. Therefore, we must not assume that we are playing around and trying to make fun with them, by fooling them.

2. Speaking about everything we hear. The Messenger (peace be upon him) said:

> **"It is enough (to make) a man a liar if he speak everything he hears." [Abu Dawood & Al-Haakim]**

A person might transfer something that was not verified saying: 'This is what I heard, and I did not add anything to it'. So what

would be his end, if what he heard was slander or vilifying of a pious person?

3. Lying to make others laugh. The Messenger said:

> **"Woe to him who speak and lie so that he can makes people laugh - woe to him, woe to him." [Ahmad, Abu Dawood & others]**

Tale Carrying (scandal) or Strife-making.

Allah, the Most High said:

> **"And obey not everyone who swear much and is considered worthless, a slanderer going about scandal-mongering, hinderer of good, transgressor, sinful..." [Al-Qalam 68:10-12]**

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

> **"The tale-carrier (scandal mongerer) would not enter Al-Jannah." [Bukhari & Muslim]**

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"Do you know what is scandaling (carrying tales)? It is transferring of the speech of someone to another person to cause trouble between them." [Al-Bukhari in Adab Al-Mufrad]

However, it should be noted that it is not scandaling if a man informs his brother what was said about him, if there would be some benefit from this. Ibn Mas"oud said:

> The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) divided something, so a man from the Ansaar said: **'By Allah! He (i.e. the**

Prophet) did not do that seeking the pleasure of Allah (implying that it was unfairly done);' so I came to the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) and informed him, immediately his face reddened and he said: **"Allah's Mercy be with Moosaa, he was tested with more than this and was patient."**[Al-Bukhari]

How to Treat the Carrier of Tales

One must verify the tales or stories brought by the carrier of tales, lest he act upon his words, thus harming someone who is innocent. Allah, the Most High, said:

"O you who believe. If a rebellious evil person come to you with a news, verify it - lest you harm a people to ignorance, sad afterwards you become regretful of what you did. " [Al-Hujuraat 43:6]

The tale carrier should be advised, admonished, and even prevented from doing such an evil action. One should also express his hate for tale carrying, by desisting from listening to such a person. In addition to the above, one should not perpetrate the evil of the tale carrier, by entertaining bad thoughts about his brother, or disclosing what was said by the tale carrier.

It is Prohibited to Deceive a Muslim who is Seeking Sincere Advice.

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"...and whoever directs his brother in an affair; but knows that the right guidance is other than that, has deceived him." [Abu Dawood & Haakim]

Generally, all persons who are directly or indirectly responsible for leading and educating the Muslims, individually (i.e. like one's wife, children, relatives, etc.) or collectively (their Jama'ah i.e. like Masjids, communities, organizations, etc.) should pay careful attention to this Hadeeth and its implications. This is because they are the ones who are most likely to find themselves involved in this serious sin of injustice and misguidance of their brothers and sisters. This often occurs when such educators/leaders knowing the truth in a given issue or affair, as established from the Qur'aan and the authentic Sunnah, deliberately gives a fatwaa, or promote directly or indirectly, the wrong opinion or version of that particular issue. The motivating factors for such deliberate deception of his fellow Muslim/s, who vested their trust in him to lead and guide them correctly, is one or more of the following:

(a) *Itibaa'-ul-Hawaa (*i.e. Following their personal prejudices/preferences/tastes/desires, etc.)

(b) Seeking to acquire or maintain a position of office (either because of fame or money)

(c) Political motives (partisanship i.e. to support the operative view of a particular organization because it appeals to its adherents, or because it appeals to the masses).

This type of deception can also result because of material benefits. For example, someone seeks the advice of his brother in relation to a particular business venture, but his brother likes the idea himself, and then Shaitaan influences him to reserve the business for himself, thus he responds to the seeker of the advice against getting into the business, explaining that there is little or no bene-

fit in it. It can also be that he deceives him because he is envious of his brother, and so he withholds what he knows from him.

The Prohibition of Proposing to a Woman who is Already Engaged.

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

> **"No one should propose (to marry a woman) if his brother already proposed." [An-Nasaa`i]**

He (peace be upon him) also said:

> **"The believer is the brother of a believer, so it is not allowed to undercut his brother in business and he does not propose (to the same woman) to whom his brother has already proposed, until the proposal of his brother is canceled." [Muslim]**

Indulging in Defaming a Muslim.

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

> **"*Ribaa* (interest) is divided into seventy two categories, the least is (as evil as) the like of a man who comes (fornicating) with his mother; and the worst form of ribaa is (the like) of a man who deliberates in the honor of his brother. " [At-Tabaraanee].**

The Two Faced Person

The two-faced person is someone who moves frequently between two persons, who are enemies of one another, and speaks to each one of them with words of praise for each one of them, and speaks against the other's enemy.

This is also manifested by a person who praises another person on one occasion (like in his presence), and on another, debases him. This is one of the signs of hypocrisy.

It was said to Ibn 'Umar, may Allah be pleased with both of them, that when we are amongst our leaders, we speak highly of them. However, when we leave them, we would say otherwise (i.e. speak badly of them). Ibn 'Umar said (of that attitude): **"We (the Sahabahs) used to regard that attitude as hypocrisy during the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him).**" [Ibn Abi Duniya Kitaabl Gheeba wan-Nameemah]

Transferring the speech of each person to the other is also described as two-tongued. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

> **"The most evil of people is the two faced person who come to these with one face and goes to those with another." [Abu Dawood]**

He (peace be upon him) also said:

> **"Who is two faced in this world will have two tongues of fire on the Day of Judgment." [Abu Dawood]**

However, if someone enters upon both of them, and agrees with what is truthful from each side without trying to find favor with either one, but his desire is to be just and to try to settle their dif-

ferences, then this is not two-faced nor hypocritical. On the contrary, this is a noble act.

Mockery, Sarcasm and Debasing Muslims.

It is evil enough for a Muslim to misuse his tongue, by indulging in mockery, sarcasm, debasing Muslims, scoffing etc. Mockery is to highlight someone's weaknesses and faults, in such a way that it is laughed at. This could either be by statement, or action. These and other related characteristics, like irony, taunting, scoffing, etc. are all prohibited in Islam.

Allah, the Glorious said:

> **"O you who believe! Let not a group mock at another group, it may be that the latter is better than the former, nor let some women mock at other women, it maybe that the latter are better than the former... " [Al-Hujuraat 43:11]**

This is because, in most cases, it is used to debase the person that is mocked at. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

> **"...It is only evil that causes a man to debase his Muslim brother..." [Muslim]**

Disclosing and Spreading of Secrets.

Secrets are meant to be kept. We are forbidden from disclosing and spreading the secrets of people. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"If someone confided something (to another person), then it is a trust.' [Abu Dawood, Ahmad and others].

So, spreading of secrets would thereafter be faithlessness, or betrayal of a trust. If there is harm resulting from this, then this is Haraam. If there is no harm, then it is blameworthy because Allah, the Most High said:

"Fulfill your trusts..." [Al-Israa 17:34]

Breaking a trust is a sign of Hypocrisy. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"The signs of hypocrisy are four...[from among them is] if he is entrusted he breaks it..." [Bukhari and Muslim].

It is Prohibited to Remind Others of One's Generosity.

Allah, the Sublime said:

"O you who believer do not render vain your charity (sadaqah) by reminders of your generosity or by injury..." [Al-Baqarah 2:264]

Allah, the Almighty, also said:

"Those who spend their wealth in the Cause of Allah, and do not follow up their gifts with reminders of their generosity or with injury, their reward is with their lord..." [Al-Baqarah 2:262]

Abu Dhar said that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"Allah will not speak to three (groups) of people on the Day of Judgment, nor look at them, nor purify them, and they will have a severe torment." He (Abu Dhar) said: "The Messenger of Allah said this thrice." Abu Dhar said: "They have failed and are losers, who are they, O Messenger of Allah?" He (peace be upon him) said: "*Al-Musbil* (one who wears his lower garment below his ankles), the one who reminds (the person he gave to) of his generosity…" [Muslim]

The proper attitude is described by Allah, the Wise:

"Kind words and forgiving of faults are better than *Sadaqah* (charity) followed by injury..." [Al-Baqarah 2: 263]

Chapter Four:
Some Seemingly Harmless Uses of the Tongue That Have Disastrous Consequences

It is commonplace to find many Muslims involved in misusing the tongue, without even recognizing its inherently evil consequences. To this effect, the Messenger (peace be upon him) also said:

> **"The servant says something that he thinks is harmless, and for which he will be plunged into the depths of the Fire for seventy autumns (years)." [Al-Tirmidhi]**

Among such seemingly harmless use of the tongue that Muslims should be aware of, are begging, praising people, singing, jesting, and disputes.

1.Begging. Although it is quite usual for people to wantonly beg, in order to fulfill some worldly need, in Islam it is something reprehensible. In many Aa-Hadeeth the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) strongly discouraged begging. For example, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

> **"If the beggar knows what is in it for him, he would not beg." [At-Tabaraanee]**

He (peace be upon him) also said:

> **"A person will continue to beg until he meets Allah, the Almighty, and upon his face will not be even a shred of flesh." [Bukhari, Muslim & An-Nisaai]**

He (peace be upon him) said:

> **"I swear upon three (things): Wealth would never decrease because of Sadaqah (charity), so give Sadaqah (charity), no person forgives (another)for an oppression done to him except that Allah will increase through it his honor and glory, and no servant opens a door to begging except that Allah opens upon him a door to poverty." [Abu Ya`laa, Ahamd & Al-Bazaar]**

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

> **"The upper hand is better than the lower the upper hand refers to giving while the lower is the one that begs." [Bukhari, Muslim & others]**

Begging is only permissible in extreme circumstances. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

> **"Begging is not beneficial except in three instances: the person who is in extreme poverty, or he who has outrageous debts or he who is responsible to pay the blood money of a close relative or friend and if he does not, then that person would be killed..." [Baihaqee and Abu Dawood]**

He (peace be upon him) further states:

> **"Whoever asks without being poor, is as if he is eating burning coals." [At-Tabaraanee & Ibn Khuzimah]**

Instead of begging, people are encouraged in Islam to work honestly and hard to fulfill their worldly needs. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"No person consumes better food than that which he earns with his own hand..." [Al-Bukhari]

In another Hadeeth he (peace be upon him) asserts thus:

"Whoever requests for what he can do without, will have something on his face (for it) on the Day of Judgment." [Ahmad, Al-Bazaar, At-Tabaraanee]

2. Praising People: While it is not prohibited to express appreciation for someone or his works, to do so excessively, or flatteringly is disallowed. Seven (7) evils are attached to praising people. Four (4) are attached to the person who praises another and three (3) are attached to the one who is being praised. **As for the person who is praising:**

(a) One could be excessive in praising, and as such, say untrue things, thus becoming involved in lying.

(b) One could be praising a person to win his favor, thus doing it for show. Although in so doing, he outwardly manifests his love for the person, inwardly he does not believe everything he says. His showing off, therefore, amounts to nothing less than hypocrisy.

(c) He says things that he is not certain about and about, which he is in no position to truly assess.

(d) Through praises, he could make the praised one feel encouraged, although he might be an oppressor. This is Haraam in Islam. The oppression of the oppressor must be stopped, instead of being fostered. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"Help your bother, if he is oppressor or the oppressed." It was said: "How would you help him if he is the oppressor?" He (peace be upon him) said: "Restrain him from oppression and that would be helping him." [Ahmad, Bukhari & Tirmidhi]

As for the person who is being praised:

(a) Praise can cause pride within him. This quality is destructive, if it affects a person.

(b) The praised person could, thereafter, do things in order to acquire praises, instead of doing them to please Allah Alone.

(c) If he is praised, he might become satisfied with his efforts, and thereafter, reduce his desire to do good work.

If the praise is free from these evils, in both cases mentioned, then there is no harm in praising if it is truthfully acknowledging someone's good efforts. This is commendable, particularly if it encourages someone to continue doing good. And Allah knows best. It is necessary that the one who is being praised be very careful not to allow pride, self-admiration and complacency to overcome him. He must also remember that he knows himself more than the person who is praising him, and if his secrets and hidden faults are exposed to the one who is praising him, that person would desist from praising him.

When people used to praise 'Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, he used to say:

"O Allah! Forgive me for what they do not know, and do not take me to account for what they say, and make me better than they think of me."

The following Hadeeth warns us about the danger of excessive praise. Abu Bakrah said:

"A man was mentioned before the Prophet (peace be upon him) and another man praised him greatly. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: 'May Allah 's Mercy be upon you! You have cut the neck of your friend.' The Prophet (peace be upon him) repeated this many times and said: 'If it is necessary for any of you to praise some-one, then he should say: 'I think! That he is so and-so', if he really thinks that he is such. Allah is the One Who will take his account (as He knows his reality), and none can sanctify anyone before Allah.' " [Bukhari Vol. 8 #87]

3. Singing. Among the greatest of trials pertaining to the misuse of the tongue, which has afflicted the present-day Muslims, is that of singing. This is because it decorates ugly and obscene speech and make them acceptable to the ears and hearts of men. Furthermore, the way in which the evil is presented through songs raises it to a point where it not only becomes acceptable, but also loved. These same words, if spoken in regular conversation, would be totally rejected and hated. This is highlighted when adults and miners would, together, hum songs that contain lewd words, vulgarity, and obscene descriptions of both men and women.

Even worse, is the fact that words connoting Shirk are sometimes used in songs. The songs beautify them in such a way that they not only appear acceptable, but also become loved.

Another aspect of singing that is looked upon innocently, is that while many parents are very careful to monitor the company their children keep, yet they are not sufficiently keen to recognize the harmful effects of songs that their children listen to, which, in some cases, are more dangerous than the bad company from which they prohibit them. Destructive ideas, evil beliefs, rotten thought patterns have become norms, because songs were the medium through which they were spread. In addition to this, the chastity of women has now become something of the past, because vivid descriptions of women are sung, making it acceptable. Thus, what was taboo to talk about or looked on as evil by the society has now become so commonplace that not to be involved in it is looked upon as antiquated and thus looked down upon.

Songs are undoubtedly one of the most successful instruments that Satan has used to harness adults, adolescence, and even children to become involved in evil, immorality, recklessness, and disrespect for Allah's laws, as well as man's innovative laws. Allah, the Most High, said:

> **"And of mankind is he who purchases idle speech (singing) to mislead (men) from Allah's path without knowledge..." [Luqman 31: 6]**

Ibn Katheer, in his Tafseer (exegesis) of the Qur'aan, explains that idle speech refers to singing. This is based upon an explanation of this verse by the companion of the Prophet (peace be upon him) -Ibn Mas'oud.

In present day, musical instruments accompany singing. In fact, a song is not considered a song unless accompanied with musical instruments. In Islam, musical instruments are prohibited. There-

fore, songs that are accompanied by musical instruments would be even more Haraam. And Allah knows best.

4. Jesting and Joking. What is hated about jesting is continuous indulgence and excessiveness, as well as making up stories, lying and propagating half-truths (distorting something or making 'mountains of molehills'), in order to make others laugh. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

> **"Woe to the person who speak! lies to make people laugh, woe to him, woe to him." [Ahmad, Abu Dawood & others]**

However, if one controls himself by jesting only with truth, causing no hurt to anyone, and neither is he excessive with it, then there is no sin in jesting, nor would there be any harm. And Allah knows best. Life is a trust from Allah and should therefore be treated seriously. This, however, does not negate truthful jesting. The Prophet (peace be upon him) himself engaged in jesting. However, he established the limits. Thus, he (peace be upon him) said:

> **"Indeed I jest but I only speak what is true." [At-Tabaraanee].**

Muslims should not indulge in things that would cause them to destroy themselves, Therefore, they should refrain from over indulgence in jesting. The following Hadeeth of the Messenger (peace be upon him) should assist us with this. He (peace be upon him) said:

"If you know what I know, you will laugh less and weep much." [Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Baihiqee & others]

Continuous indulgence in joking can be regarded as play and amusement. As for being excessive in jesting, this brings about excessive laughter, which can kill the heart. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"...And do not laugh excessively, because excessive laughter hills the heart." [Ahmad, Tirmidhi & others]

It should be noted that this admonishment of the Prophet (peace be upon him) is contrary to the popular belief that "laughter is good for the heart."

5. Disputes and Arguments. To engage in disputes and useless arguments are prohibited based upon the statement of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him)

"No people went astray after being upon guidance except after they engaged in arguments." [Ahmad, Tirmidhi & Ibn Majah]

Bilaal ibn Sa'eed said: **"If you see a man who is insistent, argumentative, and egotistic, then such a person's loss is complete."**

Ibn Abi Lailaa said:

"I would not argue with anyone, because I would either cause him to lie, or I would anger him, because arguing is one form of objection to another person's speech with intent to show defect in it, either in the word he uses or the

meaning he implies or with the intention he intends. So, to stop an argument, stop the objections, so that every word you hear, if it is true, then acknowledge it and if it is vain or lying speech, or there is no connection with the Deen, then leave it alone by keeping silent."

The above statement of Ibn Abi Lailaa does not contradict the command to "enjoin good and forbid evil" since it is difficult to command good and forbid evil while being involved in an argument.

Allah, the Sublime said:

> **"...And if the foolish address them (with bad words) they reply with mild words of gentleness..." [Al-Furqoon 25: 63]**

Chapter Five:
General Evils of the Tongue

Speaking about Things that there is no Need with Which to Concern Oneself. Know that the most precious wealth of an 'abd (servant of Allah) is his time. Thus, whenever he expends it on that which does not concern him, then he is wasting his most valuable asset. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

> **"Part of someone's being a good Muslim is leaving alone that which does not concern him." [At-Tirmidhi]**

One of the reasons that pushes someone to get involved in speaking about things which does not concern him, is his desire to know that which there is no need to know or being satisfied with talking about things that have no benefit.

The cure for this is to be aware that every second of one's life is part of his most precious wealth, and that his tongue is a net with which he should hunt for good deeds. Being neglectful of this important fact will only lead to great losses in the Hereafter.

Excessive Speech

Another way in which the tongue is misused is by excessive speech. This involves engaging in speech that there is no need to concern oneself with, as well as being excessive in expressing oneself by speaking more than is necessary.

Therefore, in cases where there is need for someone to express oneself, he should stick to the minimum words necessary to express his ideas. To exceed that can be regarded as being excessive. This is a negative attitude although the one who is involved in it would accrue no sins. However, the time spent in repeating what he said could have been spent in saying something good, which would give him a reward in the Hereafter.

'Ataa said: **"Those that were before you (the Salaf), used to detest excessive speech. And they considered anything as excessive speech except speaking about the Book of Allah, the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), commanding good and forbidding evil, and speaking about what a man needs to speak because of a need he has to fulfill in his daily life."**

Engaging in Vain Talk

Even worst than the above categories, is indulgence in vain talk, since it involves sin. Acts of disobedience, such as men discussing the affairs of women, sitting around with men who are drinking alcohol and mixing with bad company, are common examples of vain talk or deeds. Ibn Mas'oud said:

"The man with the most mistakes on the Day of Judgment is the one who engages most in vain speech."

Allah, the Most High said:

> **"Successful indeed are the believers. Those who offer their prayers with solemnty and full submissiveness. And those who turn away from *Al-Laghw* (dirty, false, evil vain talk, falsehood)..." [Al-Muminoon 23:1-3]**

He, the Sublime also said:

> **"And it has already been revealed to you in the Book (the Qur'aan) that when you hear the verses of Allah being denied and mocked at, then sit not with them, until they engage in a talk other than that..." [An-Nisaa 4:140]**

And in another aayah it also states:

> **"(The pious) in Paradise (Jannah) will ask one another about the *Mujrimeen* (the guilty ones): "What caused you to enter Hell?" They will say: "We were not of those who used to offer prayers, nor did we feed the poor, and we used to talk falsehood (all that which Allah hated)**

with vain talkers, and we used to belie the Day of Judgment." [Al-Muddathir: 40-46]

A Shameless, Vulgar and Indecent Tongue

This is not only offensive, but also prohibited. It originates from being malicious, vile, wicked, and reproachful. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

"A believer is not a shameless person, nor one who curses, nor an obscene person nor is he indecent." [At-Tirmidhi and Al-Baihaqie].

Gossip

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"I command you with three things and I prohibit you from three (things)- I command you to worship Allah and not to associate anything in worship with Him, to hold fast to the rope of Allah all together and not to divide, and to obey whoever Allah causes to be in charge of your affairs.[8] And I prohibit you from gossiping and idle-

[8] It should be noted that who **"Allah causes to be in charge of your, affairs"** are the scholars, as Allah, the Most High, describes in the following Aayah:

"When there comes to them some matter touching (public) safety or fear, they make it known (among the people). If only they had referred it to the Messenger or to those charged with authority among them, the proper investigators would have understood it from them (directly)... " [An-Nisaa 4: 83]

talk, excessive questioning and from wasting money." [Authentic from the Hiliyah of Abi Na'eem].

It is Prohibited for a Woman to Describe another Woman to her Husband.

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"...and she describes her to her husband as if he were looking at her." [Bukhari]

This type of description has many dangers; among them is that love for the other woman might enter the husband's heart, and so he starts wishing that he was with the other woman that is described to him, instead.

The Prohibition to use the Word 'if' Relative to Qadr (Allah's Decree).

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"The strong believer is better and more loved by Allah than a weak believer, but in each of them is good; aspire after what is going to benefit you and seek Allah's help and do not despair, and if anything afflicts you, then do not say: 'If I had done so and so, but say Allah's decree and what He wills, He will do, because 'if' opens the works of Shaitaan." [Bukhari]

This is after the incident has occurred. However, in discussing an issue about the future, there is no harm in the use of the word 'if' in discussing various approaches. And Allah knows best.

It is Prohibited for a Person to say "such and such" is in Jannah or in Jahannam or that he is a Kaafir.

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"There were two men who were living as brothers; one of them was sinful, while the other strove very much to perform his devotion to Allah. The striver (of good) would continuously see the other in sin, and so he would continuously advise him to leave it. The sinner retorted: 'Leave me, by my Lord – are you sent as a watcher over me?' worshipper said: 'By Allah, Allah will not forgive you, or (he said) Allah will not make you enter Jannah. After their souls were taken, they were brought together before Allah, so He said to the striver: 'Did you have knowledge of Me, or are you able to do what is in My Hand?' Allah said to the sinner 'Go to Jannah by my Mercy' and said to the other 'Take him to the fire (of Jahannam).' " [Abu Dawood and Ahmad]

If a person calls a Muslim 'O Kaafir (unbeliever)', then kufr will befall one of them. If what he said was true, then it is as he related. However, if it is not true, then the kufr would be his lot. [Hadeeth -Bukhari and Muslim]

The Prohibition of Defaming one's Kin.

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"Two types of people from among men have disbelief (kufr) in them, the defamer of his kin (close family rela-

tives), and the woman who wails and lament over the dead." [Muslim]

It is clear from the above hadeeth, that it is also prohibited for women to wail over the dead.

It is Prohibited to Boast.

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"Allah has revealed to me that you all should be humble, so that no person would oppress another, and neither should there be anyone displaying pride, or boast to another person." [Muslim]

The Prohibition to Speak while the Imaam is giving the Khutbah on Friday (Jumu'ah).

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"Whoever says 'shut up' to his brother while the Imaam is addressing the people (in the Khutbah) on the Day of Juma'ah has done an evil act. " [Al-Bukhari]

In this Hadeeth the person who is telling the other to be quiet is actually involved in "commanding good and forbidding evil". However, the gravity of speaking during the Khutbah, while the Imaam is speaking, is so great, that even this noble act cannot be done.

Abu Ad-Dardaa said:

"The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) was on the Minbar, addressing the people, and he (peace be upon him) recited a particular aayah. Ubay Ibn Ka'b was sitting next to me, so I asked him: 'When was that aayah revealed?' He refused to speak to me, until the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) came down from the minbar, and then he said to me: 'You have nothing from the Friday Prayer but your vain speech.' When the Prophet (peace be upon him) had finished, I went to him and informed him of what has happened, and he (peace be upon him) said: 'Ubay has spoken the truth, if you hear the Imaam speaking, be quiet until he is finished.' " [Ahmad & At-Tabaraanie]

Prohibition to give Respectable Titles to Hypocrites and Innovators.

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

"Do not address a hypocrite by using respectable titles (like sir, master etc.), for even if he is in such a position, you would have aroused the anger of your Lord, Master of Honor and Glory." [Abu Dawood]

Blasphemy, Insult, Ridicule and Abuse.

a) It is prohibited to insult, abuse or blaspheme Allah, His Messenger, His Deen, and/or His Book. These are all aspects of kufr (disbelief).

Allah, the Most High said:

"If you ask them (about this) they declare: 'We were only talking idly and joking.' Say 'Was it at Allah, and His Aayaat (signs, revelation, etc.,) and His Messenger that you were mocking? Make no excuse; you have disbelieved after you had believed..." [At-Taubah 9: 65-66]

In the Tafseer of Ibn Katheer the following narration is related as the reason for revelation of this aayah. Ibn 'Umar, Muhammad Ibn K'ab, Zayd Ibn Aslam and Qatadaah have all contributed to the establishment of the following Hadeeth. In the course of the campaign of Tabuk, a man came up and declared:

"We have seen no people with greater appetites, more lying or more cowardly in battle, than the Prophet of Allah, and his companions."

Aws ibn Maalik rose and said: **"It is rather you who are the liar, you are a Munafiq pretending to be a Muslim. I shall tell the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) about you."**

Aws went to the Prophet (peace be upon him) to inform him but he found that revelation had already preceded him. (When the news reached) the man, he mounted his camel, sought the Prophet of Allah (peace be upon him) and said: "...But we were only joking trying to pass the time while traveling." Ibn 'Umar said: "He was clinging to the saddle belt of the Prophet's camel as it ran, his feet and legs being battered by the rough ground, and repeating: 'but we were only joking...' and the Prophet insisting, without turning his face to him said: 'Joking! Joking with Allah? With His Revelation and With His Prophet?' "

b) It is prohibited to abuse or blaspheme the Sahabahs (the companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him)

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

> **"May Allah curse the one who abuse or blaspheme my companions."[At-Tabaranee, Al-Khateeb Al-Baghdadee]**

He (peace be upon him) also said:

> **"Do not insult/blaspheme my companions, for by the One in Whose Hand is my soul, if one of you spend the like of the mountain of Uhud in gold (in Allah's way) you would not equal their support, or not even half of their support." [Bkhari & Muslim]**

It is painful to hear people, who claim that they are Muslims, abuse the noblest of men of this ummah, like Abu Bakr, and 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with them), or even other Sahabahs, like Mu'aawiyah (may Allah be pleased with him).

c) It is prohibited for a Muslim to abuse or blaspheme another Muslim, The Messenger (peace be upon him) said:

> **"Abusing/blaspheming of the Muslim is evil and immoral whilst fighting him is kufr (disbelief)." [Bukhari & Muslim]**
>
> **He (peace be upon him) further states: "The Muslim is he from whom other Muslims are safe from his hand and his tongue." [Muslim]**

d) It is prohibited to abuse/blaspheme the dead. The Messenger (peace be upon him) said:

> **"Do not abuse/blaspheme the dead." [Bukhari]**

e) It is prohibited to insult/blaspheme what the unbelievers worship other than Allah. Allah, the Most High said:

> **"And insult not those whom they (the disbelievers) worship besides Allah lest they insult Allah wrongfully without knowledge." [Al-An'aan: 108]**

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

> **"Do not cause harm to the Muslim because of insult or abuse to a kafir (disbeliver)." [Al-Haakim & Al-Baihaqee]**

f) The Prohibition to abuse the wind.

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

> **"Do not abuse/blaspheme the wind because it circulates from Allah, it brings mercy and punishment. However, ask Allah for its good, and seek refuge with Allah from its evil." [Al-Haakim & Ibn Majah]**

g) The prohibition to blaspheme the rooster (cock fowl).

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:

> **"Do not abuse/blaspheme the rooster, because it awakens (people) for prayer." [Abu Dawood]**

h) The prohibition to blaspheme time (As-Dahr)

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

> **"Do not abuse/blaspheme time..." [Muslim]**

i) Do not blaspheme fever.

The Messenger (peace be upon him) entered upon Umm As-Saaib and said to her:

"What is the matter with you, O Umm Saaib that you are trembling'" She said "Fever, (there is) no blessing of Allah in it". He (peace be upon him) said "Do not blaspheme fever, because it wipes out the sins of the children of Adam, as the bellows extract the dirt from iron." [Muslim]

Conclusion

May Allah, the Most High assist us to purify our tongues, and avoid its evil consequences. According to Ibn 'Umar, the thing that needs the most purification by any person, is his tongue. Let us guard our tongues from these evils, lest our works be destroyed. Remember the statement of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to Mu'aadh, may Allah be pleased with him:

"...then he (peace be upon him) said "Shall I not tell you of what control all that?" I said: "Yes, O Messenger of Allah," and he took hold of his tongue and said: "Restrain this." I said "O Prophet of Allah, will what we say be held against us?" He (peace be upon him) said: "May your mother be bereaved for you, O Mu'adh! Is there anything that topples people on their faces - or he said on their noses - into the Hell fire, other than the harvest of their tongues." [At-Tirmidhi]

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